Oíche Sheanchais
le Mollie Lynch

Ráth Chanainn, Áth Leacach, Co. Luimnigh

Arna chur amach mar chomóradh ar:

TIONÓL

An Cumann le Béaloideas Éireann
Cill Fhionáin, Co. Luimnigh
28-30 Aibreán 1989

Oíche Sheanchais le Mollie Lynch

Liam Ó Dochartaigh
a bhailigh agus a chuir in eagar

Roinn na Gaeilge
Coláiste Oideachais Thuamhumhan
Luimneach
1989

Oíche Sheanchais le Mollie Lynch

.i. An Evening of Seanchas with Mollie Lynch, Rathcannon, Athlacca, Co. Limerick (6th December 1980)

© Liam Ó Dochartaigh 1989

Clóscríobh: Mary O'Malley
Clóchur : Máire Mhic Gabhann
Cóipeáil agus Ceangal : Eamonn Sheahan

BROLLACH

Is é atá sa leabhrán seo, trascríbhinn d'oíche sheanchais le Mollie Lynch, Ráth Chanainn, Áth Leacach, Cill Mocheallóg, Co. Luimnigh, a chuireas ar téip ina teach féin ar an Satharn, 6ú Nollaig 1980. Beagán faoi bhun dhá uair an chloig seanchais atá i gceist san ábhar seo agus tá an t-iomlán á chur i gcló mar eiseamláir de sheisiún taifeadta dá leithéid.

Mar is léir ó na cuimhní pearsanta sa leabhrán seo (39. Personal Reminiscences), rugadh Mollie Lynch (née Mary Tolton) i Mount Coote, Co. Luimnigh, ar 20 Aibreán 1907. Rinneadh í a uchtú ag Ellen Connors (nó Connell) i Ráth Chanainn nuair a bhí sí ceithre bliana d'aois. Is ann a bhí cónaí uirthi an chuid eile dá saol. Phós sí Jim Lynch, cléireach paróiste, Ráth Chanainn, i 1943. Nuair a fuair a fear céile bás, ghlac Mollie cúram an chléirigh uirthi féin nó gur éirigh sí as sa bhliain 1980. Fuair Mollie Lynch bás Dé Domhnaigh, 31 Bealtaine 1981, in Ospidéal Naomh Camillus i Luimneach. Solas na bhFlaitheas dá hanam uasal.

Ba é an Dr. Dáithí Ó hÓgáin a luaigh Mollie liomsa ar dtús ar an Satharn, 27 Deireadh Fómhair 1979, le linn don bheirt againn a bheith ag moltóireacht ar chomórtais scéalaíochta an Oireachtais san R.D.S. i mBaile Átha Cliath. Bliain nó mar sin ina dhiaidh sin d'iarras ar Mhainchín Seoighe, Baile Tancaird, Cill Mocheallóg, mé a chur in aithne do Mhollie. Thugas mo chéad chuairt uirthi, in éindí le Mainchín, ar an Satharn, 22 Samhain 1980, ach ní raibh sí ar fónamh. Chuaigh mé féin arís chuici ar an Satharn, 6 Nollaig 1980, agus rinneadh an t-agallamh is ábhar don leabhrán seo a thaifeadadh. Sa tráthnóna, idir 7.45 agus 10.30 a rinneadh an taifeadadh agus bhí mac Mhollie, James, i láthair don chéad 40 nóiméad nó mar sin. Tagann sé féin (JL) i gceist i mír 8.

Aimsir na Nollag 1980, bhí Mollie bhocht tinn san ospidéal i Luimneach. Thugas cuairt eile uirthi sa mbaile ar an Satharn, 10 Eanáir 1981, ach bhí sí an-lag. Bhí sí ag feabhsú, cheapas, nuair a thugas mo chuairt dheiridh uirthi ar an Aoine, 23 Eanáir 1981, tráth a ndearna mé agallamh eile a thaifeadadh, ceann níos giorra ná an chéad cheann (thart ar uair agus 20 nóiméad). Ach mo léan, ní raibh biseach buan i ndán do Mhollie.

Duine breá ab ea Mollie. Bean bheag gan éitir ab ea í tráth ar bhuaileas-sa léi ach bhí sí géimiúil. Bhí sí thar a bheith fáilteach agus fial faoin a cuid seanchais. Bhí féith an ghrinn go láidir inti - rud nach léir ón trascríbhinn; bhí sí féin ag gáirí go croíúil le linn di roinnt de na míreanna seanchais a aithris (e.g. na clanna nach dtiocfadh an bhean sí chucu; agus eachtra na nDubhchrónach i gCill Mocheallóg). Ba léir chomh maith, áfach, ó thuin agus ó theilgean a cuid cainte go raibh an creideamh traidisiúnta go láidir inti, go háirithe agus í ag trácht ar eachtraí a tharla tráthanna áirithe den bhliain nó in aice le láithreacha áirithe sa cheantar máguaird.

Ní mór dom mo bhuíochas ó chroí a ghabháil le Mainchín Seoighe a chuir roinnt den eolas faoi Mhollie atá anseo ar fáil dom; táim buíoch de chomh maith as cead a tabhairt dom an t-alt cuimhneacháin ar Mhollie a d'fhoilsigh sé sa *Limerick Leader* tar éis a báis a athfhoilsiú. Ba mhór an chabhair dom leis leabhar Mhainchín ar Dhromain agus Áth Leacach, go háirithe agus na nótaí á gcur le chéile agam; go deimhin ba mhór an áis don léitheoir leabhar seo Mhainchín a léamh le lántairbhe a bhaint as an ábhar seanchais atá sa leabhrán seo.

Tá buíochas dlite uaim freisin do na daoine seo a leanas: An Dr. Dáithí Ó hÓgáin, agus an Dr.Séamas Ó Catháin, Roinn Bhéaloideas Éireann, Coláiste na hOllscoile, Baile Átha Cliath; Mary O'Malley agus Máire Mhic Gabhann, Coláiste Oideachais Thuamhumhan; Eamonn Sheahan; agus mac Mhollie, James Lynch, Ráth Chanainn.

Creidim go bhfuil cáilíochtaí faoi leith ag baint le seanchas Mhollie Lynch, cáilíochtaí a mbeadh an-suim ag lucht béaloidis iontu agus mar sin gur cuí go mbeadh an leabhrán seo á fhoilsiú mar chuid de na himeachtaí agus mar chomóradh ar TIONÓL an Chumainn le Béaloideas Éireann i gCill Fhionáin i gContae Luimnigh.

Liam Ó Dochartaigh
Luimneach
25 Aibreán 1989

STORYTELLER PASSES

The seanchaí, or traditional storyteller, held in the highest esteem by generations of our people, has now all but vanished.

Mrs. Mollie Lynch, of Rathcannon, Athlacca, who died on the 31st May, was the last of the great storytellers in that part of Limerick. Mollie had an immense fund of stories and memories. She could tell of happenings in the locality in pre-Famine times as if they had occurred only two or three years before. She was a great source of social history, she could tell, for example, where flax was grown locally, and who the last spinners were; she could tell of hedgeschools, and evictions and the people's pastimes. And she had the most wonderful tales of ghosts and fairies and leprechauns, about whose existence she always gave the impression she never had the slightest doubt.

She herself had seen difficult times, but she went through life with a light heart, a loving interest in people, and a great sense of humour.

For most of her life her gifts as a storyteller were known only to people of her own district; but with the establishment of a Glór na nGael group in Athlacca about five years ago, and their featuring of her at a number of functions, long-due recognition at last came her way. Donncha Ó Dúlaing featured her a number of times in his 'Highways and Byways' programme, and soon scholars and folklorists were making their way to her door. These included Bo Almqvist, Swedish Professor of Irish Folklore in U.C.D. (and a fluent Irish speaker), Dáithí Ó hÓgáin, lecturer in Irish Folklore, U.C.D., and Liam Ó Dochartaigh, another noted folklorist.

I took Liam to meet Mollie one Saturday last November, as he was anxious to question her about a particular folklore subject on which he was working. She told us she wasn't feeling in the best of form that day - we didn't know, but it was the beginning of her fatal illness - and she suggested to Liam that he come back another day when she'd be able to do justice to the subject. Liam returned on a number of occasions when she was feeling better, and collected much more lore from her. Mollie was always kind and courteous, and willing to talk for hours with anybody who called to interview her. She loved meeting people, and could entertain any company.

Coming from an area famous for its horses, Mollie, as one might expect, had a keen interest in horse racing, and liked to have a little bet on occasion. Her interest in racing is well illustrated by a comment she made to Donncha Ó Dúlaing. On the 12th October, 1978, 60 people from Athlacca travelled to Dublin for the press conference at which Athlacca's winning of the premier Glór na nGael award was to be formally announced. Mollie was one of those who travelled. It was a big occasion for her, for it was her first visit to Dublin. Some time later, when Donncha Ó Dúlaing interviewed her on 'Highways and Byways', he asked her if she had been very impressed by Dublin. Yes, she had been fairly impressed, she said; but then added that seeing the Curragh race course from the bus was a far greater thrill than seeing Dublin!

By a strange coincidence, on the very evening, and at the very time that Mollie's remains were being conveyed from the Limerick hospital, where she died, to Athlacca church, her voice was going out on a radio programme as she told the story of a man she knew who had a frightening experience as he went home at a very late hour having been out all night playing cards. The programme was one on card playing, and it was produced by Dáithí Ó hÓgáin (a native of Bruff, now lecturer in Folklore in U.C.D.) who had recorded the story from Mollie a couple of years ago.

Mollie had been parish clerk of Athlacca for many years, up to her retirement last year, and so was very much part of the life of the parish. Of Mollie Lynch it could be truly said: Ní bheidh a leithéid arís ann - her likes will never again be there. An old and gracious way of life died with her. We will all miss her. Go dtuga Dia aoibhneas na bhFlaitheas di!

"An Mangaire Súgach" (i.e. Mainchín Seoighe)
Limerick Leader : 13 June 1981.

A Note on the Transcription Procedure

The written text of the transcribed tapes could not adequately represent the pronunciation, intonation or pattern of Mollie's speech. In the transcription, the spelling has been normalised with the following exceptions:

(I) contracted verb forms are retained when spoken in that way (e.g. I'll, He'd, I'd, etc. instead of I will, He had/would, I had/ would, etc.);

(ii) certain words are written as spoken (e.g. agin for against);

(iii) Irish words are written in Irish except for words with accepted spellings in Hiberno-English (e.g. pishogues for piseoga).

Grammar forms, even when inconsistent within the transcript as a whole, have been represented as faithfully as possible.

The most important symbol used is three dots (i.e. ...). This symbol can stand for:

(a) a sentence begun but not finished, even when the sentence contains only one word, such as "But...";

(b) a change of direction in mid-sentence; or

(c) an interrupted sentence (usually by the interviewer) indicating where the break occurs and where the sentence carried on.

Some individual words on the tape remain unclear to me. Such words are indicated thus: (unclear). In cases where I have written words which approximate to the sound on the tape, but which I am still doubtful about, I have inserted (?) or *(sic)*.

The transcription is complete except in the following exceptional cases:

(i) where names were given and their inclusion, and the identification of the people involved, could in the particular instances cause hurt; and

(ii) in two instances, one of them at Mollie Lynch's own request and the other relating to Mollie herself, personal details have been omitted (in neither case is there more than three or four short sentences involved).

One obvious slip of the tongue has also been silently amended. Interjections by the interviewer (e.g. Yes., I see., etc.) have been omitted where these were more of a supportive nature than a part of the dialogue between interviewer and informant.

The titles of each item of seanchas have been inserted by Liam Ó Dochartaigh for the convenience of readers. Titles do not represent a break in the narration; breaks occurred only when there was a pause in recording (SOS) or at the end of a tape (DEIREADH TÉIPE)

An Clár Seanchais

		Page
1.	The First Wife Returns	1
2.	Minding the Well May Eve	3
3.	The Priest and the Woman who Stole Butter-Profit	3
4.	Mollie and the Banshee	5
5.	The Dog and the Card Player 1	6
6.	The Light in the Fort	7
7.	The Dog and the Card Player 2	7
8.	The Cards as Prayer-Book	8
9.	The Dead Priest Returns to Say Mass	8
10.	Bird and Animal Lore	9
11.	Rushlights in Olden Times	12
12.	More Bird Lore	12
13.	A Warning from a Robin	13
14.	The Haunted Orchard: The Crow on the Barrel	14
15.	The Haunted Orchard: The Dark Object in the Tree	14
16.	Cutting the Tree on the Fort	15
17.	Cows Mysteriously Milked in the Moat	15
18.	The Headless Coach 1	16
19.	The Robin Consoles Our Lord on the Cross	17
20.	The Hen, the *Daradaol* and Our Lord	17
21.	Swans try to Save Boy	18
22.	The Boy who Broke Robins' Eggs	18
23.	Cure in the Robin for Bad Complaint	19
24.	Mollie Receives a Warning from a Magpie	19
25.	Mollie Saved by an Apparition from the Moat	20
26.	Robin Miscellanea	21

Page

27. The Headless Coach 2 24
28. The Brown Stone from the Moat 25
29. The Robin Warns of Fire 26
30. Crickets Warn of Impending Death 26
31. Three Knocks on Door as Death Omen 27
32. More on the Robin and Fire 27
33. Mollie Sees Tall Shadow of a Man 27
34. The Turkey from the Moat 28
35. Mollie Sees Dead Brother-in-Law 28
36. Mollie Warned of Fire in Dream 30
37. Will o' the Wisp 31
38. The Haunted House in the Corcas 31
39. Personal Reminiscences 31
NOTES AND REFERENCES 36

OÍCHE SHEANCHAIS le MOLLIE LYNCH

TÉIP 1: TAOBH 1

1. The First Wife Returns

ML I'll tell you a story about Rineanna. The true story, now.

This man, he was a McNamara, and he was married twice. His first wife died and left two sons. So, a short time after she died, the youngest of the two sons died. He married again and he had one son by the second wife. But this May Morning, the eldest man was gone to Newmarket-on-Fergus and they were going to put down the dinner, herself and her mother. This woman, dressed in the attire of about seventy years before that, came in across the yard and she had this little scarf - plaid thing - down and little white cap and she walked in, and short sleeves, and she saluted her. The mother, Mrs. Casey, saluted her and she stopped - standing - and she looked around the house.

"Can I do anything for you, Mam?" says she. And... "Well," she says, "I'd do with a bit of help." So. "I'm sorry," says she, "you don't seem prepared to take help." And... "First of all," says she, "I want a lend of your skillet." "Oh! Mam," says she, "Maggie is just putting down the potatoes in it." "It's just only," says she "for one five minutes!"

She handed her the skillet. It was black out, the three legged little pot. So, she went out across the yard with it in the one hand and a check apron on her. She was spotless! She went out an iron gate and she crossed at the end of the house. Maggie ran across and she couldn't see her in any direction. But there was a fort about from here to the road at the back of the cowhouse and the second son was coming in and he crossed the yard and she said: "Did you see anyone?" "No!" says he. So, the boss was inside in the room - the old man. And she said: "I'll call him out to you," says she. That was, you know, when she came back with the skillet. "No, Missus," says she. She was giving her a saucer of flour. "You could mend your hand better than that in charity," says she. So... "Don't tell him," says she, "I called or that I was here." Maggie went to handle the pot and it was like you'd catch a coal of fire. And it was brilliant; the little rings were pure brilliant and the legs of it shining. She ran out across the yard and the woman was just going into the fort.

When the son came home that night, Mrs. Casey said to him: "We had an odd visitor, May Morning and all," she told him. "Why didn't you call out Dad to her?" says he. "She wouldn't let me," says she. So. "I'm telling him," says he. He started crying. Says he: "That was Margaret," says he, "my first wife." That was the very way she dressed. So wasn't it remarkable?

LÓD And that happened in Rineanna?

ML That happened in Rineanna, at McNamaras in Rineanna. The house was a high house and there was a field running down to where the present Rineanna - it is the Shannon, I suppose, now, or a lake. I seen it once in television. The Greenes were brought out from the island and her mother and them were very great. But before you will go, although it is wrecked looking, I'll show you a picture that was bought in Rineanna for eleven pence! Now!

LÓD What else would happen on May Eve? On May Eve, or May Morning?

ML Pishogues. And it is what I'm just alluding to now. Witchcraft, as well. Valpurgis night, All Halloween and May Eve, them were the three principle festivals.

LÓD What were the three ones again?

ML Valpurgis night, May Eve and All Halloween ...

LÓD And when was Valpurgis night?

ML ... and often on Christmas Eve, you see. But the first wife, he told Mrs. Casey and her daughter, came out to him out of the churchyard where she was and she frightened the young horse he had. And she said: "Don't pass by there again," says she, "with that horse. She is out to carry you." She wanted... The place would have fallen to the eldest, do you see? And she wanted it, of course, to fall to the son. Which it did. He was found dead in front of the church gate the second next turn he went. And his leg... The horse came home without him, to the gate. The stirrup was gone. But he said she made for the horse. He seen her on two occasions but he was gone by the first one. So wasn't that strange?

LÓD It was.

ML They tell you they don't come back. They do!

LÓD Do they?

ML I'm just telling you that in case you may ever pass that way, check on McNamaras of Rineanna...

LÓD Right, I will, by gor.

ML ...that was there in Greenes' time. They're still there, I'd say, the descendants. He married and he had... There was no family by the second wife, but an uncle's son, a nephew, got it, McNamara, and it was still going.

LÓD Who were the Greenes?

ML The Greenes, they were living in an island, and that's now... That is in the area where the planes and all are coming, the airport is now. So, wasn't that strange?

LÓD It was strange.

ML She was only... Wait a while now! I could give you the exact date now. She was about twenty-one when this happened. And she died here at the age of seventy-seven in nineteen thirty. Can you go back?

LÓD Eighteen eighty?

ML Well, now, that'd be the time.

LÓD Eighteen eighty. I see, by gor. Well, what else would they do, or what else would happen, or stories they would have about May Eve?

2. Minding the Well May Eve

ML About May Eve? There's a story of Knocktwo on May Eve. A small well over here in Knocktwo.

There was small families and they had a habit of minding their well on May Eve, because if somebody carried the water, they'd carry your luck. They'd carry the fat. But this man, his son, after he dying, went out to mind it and he had a wife and four children. And he wasn't back at four o'clock in the morning. She went out to milk the cows, across the yard. And the young lad said: "Mamma, there's Dadda in." So... She went in, and he was inside in the bed and he said: "Did you meet him?" She finished the cow, you know? "Did you meet him?" "Who?" says she. "My father," says he. "He came in here," says he "and he all streams of blood," says he. "And he said to me: Never again, Tadhg", says he, "do to me what you done all night!" "What was it?" says he. "Did you hear all the trampling," says he, "and the voices around you?" "I did, Dadda," says he. "Well," says he... His hands were tore; his face was tore. "There am I," says he "from trying to protect you from them harming you." "Never again," says he, "go to that state".

3. The Priest and the Woman who Stole Butter-Profit

But, also about Rineanna, what she one told me now... She witnessed this!

There was an old woman with about seven cows. Her son was married and she was mad to have him make money and make big things. So, the whole place was talking of all the butter they used to have out of the seven cows! And, this parish priest was going around, the Canon. "Oh! Canon, that old lady have all our bit of goods carried!" So, he was dying laughing at them.

And May Morning, about four o'clock, he got a sick call. He had a high back-to-back trap, and he was driving along the top of the hill, just longside now, this place Rineanna. And this old woman was standing above on the ditch, and she with two spancels, and she wheeling one that way and the other one at her back.

He pretended... He said, "I cry half, Sally!" says he, and he driving on, you know?

LÓD What did he say?

ML "I cry half, Sally!" Sally was the old woman's name. She never answered. But, he came back after the call, and he had two cows of his own. And the housekeeper came in the following evening. "Father!", says she, "Will you come out here, for God's sake," says she, "or I'll leave the house!" "What is it?" says he. "The firkin thing and all," says she, "is gone up with the dint of butter abroad!" And he started roaring laughing at her. He went out. There was over a firkin and a half of butter in the small little bit of cream she put up. She had to be putting it in and out.

So he went around. This one had whey. That one had sour milk. So, he eventually went to the old woman and she was sitting at the fire and she looking in. A big hob. So, he attacked her. "What were you doing," says he, "you old rogue, that morning, May Morning?" "Oh! 'sha, ***a stórach***," says she, "the old creature, Tadhg," says she, "want to live," says she, "and he have three or four young children." "You old vagabone," says he, "didn't you rear seven or eight of them yourself!" Do you see? "This must be the way you were rearing them!"

So, she pretended not to hear him and he went over and he said: "I'm not leaving the house," says he, "till I find out what you were doing." "Oh! ***a stórach***", says she, "I have it there in a bottle. I squeeze the spancels into it, two little bottles of water." "Hand them out to me!" says he. So. "Now," says he, "what did you do?"

At Mass-time, in the Consecration... She was joined the league of the spiritualists and at Mass-time, during the Consecration, she should have this yellow parchment and put it up between her and the rising of the Host. Instead of GOD it was DOG, whichever way you'd turn it. So, he went to the door and he fired the two bottles across the yard and they hit the orchard wall. And there was butter oozing out through the wall before he left! He shook her anyway and he put down the leaflet in the fire and she tried to save it and she roaring and bawling. It did a gush of flame and a blaze about forty feet in the air went out the top of the chimney!

The old woman died about three years after. But he said to her, "You won't die in your bed!" says he.

LÓD Where did she die?

ML She was in and out, in and out, and it was in the middle of the floor they got her dead. So, now! There is pishogues for you! But they can be worked!

LÓD Oh! they can, I'd say. We'll listen to that for a half minute.

SOS

4. Mollie and the Banshee

LÓD About the banshee first...

ML About the banshee, I was only about seven years when I heard the banshee first. That was and I going to school. And I heard the singing, as I thought, and I just spotted this white figure coming over across and it was of a May morning, and I ran from where I was back to the school and the schoolmaster met me and he said: "Mary," says he, "you'll kill yourself! You're as white as a sheet. What happened you?" I never told him, nor couldn't, that I saw the white figure. I came home here. I told it. And they told me such a one died sudden at a quarter to nine, just at the time. It was a woman in the parish, a very old woman. But it is into Harry's moat the figure disappeared. Up over a bush and in. And it wasn't touching the ground. Now! So.

LÓD And it that what the banshee is? Somebody who would be after dying?

ML Some will... She was seen in that very farm on two occasions. Some will both hear and see her, more won't. But, I heard her at four o'clock one evening when a neighbour here was dead. It's after a family, O'Regan, O'Mahony, Carmody, O'Donnell. All those. O'Flaherty. But never after a Fitzgerald or a Fitzpatrick because they're English descent!

LÓD They know their own!

ML But, I heard it at four o'clock in the evening and I heard it the evening before and the girl was only just dead that time. But I heard it at four o'clock and the funeral going out in the evening. And another man died sudden in the Corcas.

DEIREADH TÉIPE: SOS

LÓD You were saying there that you heard it yourself. What kind of noise would you hear?

ML It's one time longside you. You'd think it would be singing. And another time then, it is a prolonged wail in the breeze. I've heard it about eight or nine times. But... I heard it one night at a quarter to one and I coming hither from the chapel, across the field, Holy Thursday night. And it came right under the window above there. I was by myself. And I could hear it quite plain, coming on down across. Next evening I heard there did a nun die in Kanturk that was born and reared above at Regan's. And the old woman that was here reared her. There was coincidence!

LÓD That is why you might have heard it, would it be?

ML Well, no, I wasn't thinking of that nun at all, sure. But... How it should have tracked... I didn't ever know the nun or see her, only to hear tell of her. She'd be an aunt of the present Michael Regan now. So.

LÓD There you are. What about this ***lios***? Is there a ***lios*** or a fort up here on the top of the hill?

ML There is. One here, Powers' one. And... There's several there. There're two here in Hogans. They're much worse than the one up here. They are. The top one especially.

5. The Dog and the Card Player 1

Did I ever tell you about the dog and the pack of cards?

LÓD No. You didn't.

ML The boys used be gambling here at Johnny ... Creighton's they used call it that time. And there was such a row on this night to level out the game is that it went to twenty to twelve, and they used always break up before half-eleven. So they were cleared with the brush and he went in across here below and down, a moonlight night. And he was whistling away to himself, when he... To go out, there was a step by the brow of the moat. And he see this thing waving, and says he to himself: "There's no fur bush there that I remember." He was up on the ditch, when just... He dropped down at this side. This big black dog with a band around his neck and three links of a chain, sitting up, and he had a pack of cards in one paw and he clapped them on to the other.

"Have a deal of those, Red!" says he. Red fell off the ditch and ran it down home to where Pakie Lynch is living now. One side of Red's hair was as white as snow, the one turned to the moat, and the other was black. He... No matter what'd happen, he never came that way again nor he never played a card after. But it was a true story! Because, we'll say, Ellen Connell's used be there, the old woman that owned this house and she said she knew him quite well. He was found drowned in the Shannon after. That is why I'm bringing out: a person that meets a share of those don't ever live long. Some people.

6. The Light in the Fort

But, I'll tell you another story about that fort.

LÓD That's in Hogans, is it?

ML It is. He have two of them, you know. But... One of them is as good as the other. But the top one is worse! There's no trees, no bushes at all around. It is a hilly... That's where the dog was. But, I seen a round big light in that several times. It would recede down into the ground. I see it crossing the field from one to the other and I told a fellow about it and he was codding me. And this night he was coming over across the field - forgot all about it - when he saw his own shadow out in front of him. Looked behind him. This big ball of light, it was there. He ran. He went to try to go out over the gate and the gate shot open and pushed him out. He came into the yard and the light went into the yard after him. But it was only that height from the ground, the light I seen. So he didn't mock me anymore! See, it is easy to talk.

LÓD It is easy.

ML But, about...

7. The Dog and the Card Player 2

LÓD But, what about this dog and the cards? What do you think... What would they have thought the dog was?

ML The dog was medieval. Do you see, they say if you curse to a certain extent, you can...you'd be invoking the devil for this and that. They actually will represent to some people and not to more. There are fellows that can win all before them. Well, if such a fellow was in that house, that is why the dog pursued...appeared to your man. But that man was drowned in the Shannon and he had no drink taken, about three months after.

LÓD Is there magic in cards? Did they think there was kind of magic, or bad luck could be in cards?

ML There is, bad luck in them. They can put it in them. There was a spell cast in the pack of cards, you see, and the spell remained with your man, while he... It was on here, do you see? One man was winning all and, of course, this fellow, I suppose, was taking it badly.

SOS

8. The Cards as Prayer-Book

LÓD Did you ever hear the one about what the cards stand for? The ace stands for something and the two stands for something else?

ML James, you knew that, did you? There is a kind of a... The soldier, is it? Did you ever hear that one? That he got his reprieve by them. God, you knew it well, but I suppose you have it forgotten.

LÓD What was the story of it?

ML It was a kind of a... He told him the story of the cards from the start to the finish.

LÓD Was he to be hanged?

ML It was a pack of cards. It was agin...illegal here to be a soldier having a pack of cards in his pocket.

JL I think he was playing cards in church.

ML Was it?

JL He was playing cards in church and he was brought up over it.

LÓD Playing cards in church? And he was brought up over it?

ML Aw, that might be it too, you know. Could happen.

9. The Dead Priest Returns to Say Mass

But, there is one thing certain. If a priest die and has a Mass to say that he promised to say, no matter how long it goes, that priest, either dead or alive, will have to carry out that Mass or get someone to do it for him.

There was a church he was coming to for ninety years and the Mass... This man answered the Mass and he said: "I can see Heaven now," says he, "and I'll pray for you."

LÓD What was that?

ML He used come out at a quarter to twelve and ask to know was there anybody there to answer Mass, and your man fell asleep in the Confession Box and he heard the voice and he came out! The place was dimly lit up. He went down and he answered the Mass for the priest. That happened down near Limerick somewhere.

LÓD Did it?

ML It did.

LÓD What was the story again? Was it some priest who had died?

ML A priest, do you see. Supposing a priest dies young... Long ago, they'd take... You know, you'd give them so much to say a Mass? Well, it's not that you only just give a token to help them. Well, he took that down to say that Mass. If he died without saying that, the obligation was still on him. See? And the penance was, he was coming back.

LÓD And how long was he coming back for?

ML Ah, he was coming back for ninety years, he told him! The priest was dead ninety years; no one remembered him in the place. But he told the man that answered it, he was ninety years coming back. It was some place towards...what Castle? There is some Castle out there beyond Limerick. Castleconnell?

LÓD There is. Castleconnell.

ML A very country lonely little church. It is down in a little valley. It might be gone since.

SOS

10. Bird and Animal Lore

LÓD What I wanted to ask you about, was about birds and that, you know?

ML Birds. Well...

LÓD About, let's say, the common...the robin now for instance.

ML Well, the robin... Every robin has his own home - did you ever know that? - for generation. When he go, his own offspring takes up that abode and he'll keep that locality until that's extinct. He'll leave no other robin stay there for the winter. He'll build his nest in the same place and he only hatch once a year. He'll build a lovely little nest in the side of a bank, or even an old tin can, if he got it.

But the birds of this country are nearly gone. Do you know what's the cause of it? The extermination of the foxes and the badger. A badger and a fox can kill thousands of magpies, and scaldcrows, and rats. Now they are dwindled away because the scaldcrows are increasing and there's no foxes to kill them. They're killing all the birds. They're robbing the nests. They're doing everything.

LÓD The scaldcrows are?

ML They are. The thrush is nearly extinct, the wood-thrush, and the speckled thrush. The wood-thrush stays to his own place too. And he'll hatch twice a year. He'll hatch about the second week of April. They start singing the sixth or seventh of January and you won't see the comrade until about March. And they'll build then very fast. But he'll always build around the same area, that's if he's not robbed, and if he is, he'll still come back near that place and build again.

The woodcock is gone. I remember woodcock here. They haves about eleven or twelve chickens. They're bigger than a bantam hen - brown - and very quiet. But they'll build very near a house for safety. So. Because of their size and their bigness - they are much bigger than a pheasant - they are all shot out and killed. The last one, I seen her abroad there about four years ago and she was shot through the hedge. And the eleven little chickens were killed immediately after him.

LÓD Well, about the robin again, you know, you said it has its own place and that. Well, would there be one of them, or would there be the pair of them together?

ML Oh! The pair of them would be there, you know. Well, there are such birds then: the swan won't mate any more and there are certain other birds that won't mate. I'd say now the... There is a type of raven that won't mate the second time, but for...anymore.

But the swan can live for years, forty to seventy years. If anything happen her pal, she's that much time on her own. You see them there in the river or you see them in a lake, one swimming by theirself. Well, they'll remain with the young until they're eleven months old and they'll make them go and fend for theirself. But a swan proper... There are two types of swan. There's one that won't hatch only every seven years and the other every three years. I can't think of the names of them now. What's that he's called with the black in the beak?

LÓD Is there a whooper swan?

ML The whooper. Well, the crane, or the heron as he's called...

LÓD Yes. Have you any other name for him?

ML The heron, isn't it, is his name?

LÓD Did you ever call him any local name, like?

ML No, mind you, the crane is all we used...

LÓD "Johnny the Bog" or anything like that?

ML No. The only thing I can remember now, the ***gabhairín.***

LÓD *Gabhairín*?

ML It is a jack snipe. But he imitates a goat all the month of May. The whole month of May, every evening from nightfall down to maybe twelve o'clock at night. That's why people take to the heels that they heard a ghost sometimes! Over in the bog here he used to be. But them same are gone...

LÓD Who are these now?

ML Ah, with the closing in of trenches and drains. Their environment, their livelihood is gone.

A hare will rear her young at the headland of a garden or the end of a ***síog*** of hay that you left longside the house. And she'll have five out the end of March. And she'll have a second, some of them do, have a second two for the fall of the year. They're called leverets.

LÓD Young hares?

ML The young hare is a leveret. And she'll train that one... If she escape in a hunt, she'll train the young ones to do the same. A fox has the same habit.

LÓD Was there any pishogue about the hares?

ML There is. There is. A black hare is supposed to be a type of pishogue. But it is unlucky to do anything to a hare. I know... I heard tell of a man that shot a hare, and you often heard of the hare-lip?

LÓD I did.

ML Well, the next child that was born there had a hare-lip and an awful job to cure him. So, that's number one wrong agin a hare. You should not pretend to see them or take no notice of them. They're there, same as yourself. They're harmless, sure. So.

But the fox has a strange habit. The fox, if he know you, he'll leave you see the young plain. He'll only give them a warning bark if you're over right him and they'll look out the burrow at you. She generally haves five but she'll remove them if she sees strangers knocking around. She'll move them one by one. The hare moves her young too, if there's trouble. They'll move them to a safer place. But. Now one thing you didn't ask me about! The wren. I have two of them out here.

LÓD Have you? You have two wrens?

ML There are two. The pair are there, and in the winter-time they will come in here over the eave of the house and he'll sleep there every night and she'll sleep abroad where the nest was. And the nest, there's hardly a penny...

LÓD I think I'll stop you there.

DEIREADH TÉIPE: SOS

TÉIP 2: TAOBH 1

11. Rushlights in Olden Times

LÓD What are these now?

ML They're growing in the field or on the side of a river bank.

LÓD Rushes?

ML Rushes. Well, in the German war, you had no paraffin oil, no anything, but you'd light two of them, one at each side of the table, and they used to make a thing called a sconce.

LÓD What was it?

ML That was their pronunciation for it. It is an Irish for some little... That the rush would slip up through it and turn up. When it would be gone then, it would drop down into the little plate of it. It would do no harm, burn nothing, but...

12. More Bird Lore

LÓD You were telling me about the wrens, about your two wrens.

ML About the wren. The wren will pick out an abode and he's so tiny is that he can nearly get in and out past you and you'll only know him by one feather standing up out of his tail. A butterfly would be as big as him. But he rears thirteen, eleven to thirteen, youngsters. And he'll make it an eggshell make - or a seashell make, rather. They'll be wide this way and it will be coming out into a funnel and the front of it will be turning towards you. And he enters there and all the children are inside. So he's all day and nearly all night feeding them, himself and the hen. And he'll have them there until they're well able to fly. And when they are able to fly then, he'll carry them to the back of the house and he'll be whistling and singing till they're able to imitate him. And they'll all take off then to where there is low furze bushes. And they live on the furze seed.

So also does the goldfinch.

LÓD Do they? Furze seed?

ML A goldfinch will hatch in a low thurry fur bush.

LÓD In a low...?

ML A low thurry fur bush that'll be just growing from the ground. That is why they're getting scarce for they're burning them out. See? Well, they'll have five or six... They're valuable birds. There used to be two of them, or three of them here - two nests of them here. There in a low blackthorn when they had nothing else. They'd go into it, a cross place where you won't pick them out. See. So, they have various nests of them here. There in a low blackthorn when they had nothing else. They'd go into it, a cross place where you won't pick them out. See. So, they have various habits.

LÓD Are there any stories about birds?

ML The blackcap. The blackcap, now. You often heard tell of a weed called the blackcap?

LÓD I did hear tell of it.

ML When that's left in the field, they live on the seed of it in snow. Do you see? So, the cutting out of weeds have a lot of harm done. There's another thing then that...

Oh, yes, I was going to tell you about the heron. He builds on the highest tree, where there's a clump of trees and he won't draw, or touch a stick in that, if there was a thousand trees there. He'll go to the nearest farmer's house, three or four fields away and the biggest and the most heavy crooked stick he can find, he'll handle it about three inches from the end, and he'll swing along, lap hither and over. But no crow dare build within four trees or six of him. He'll keep the coast clear. And it is Father Leonard told me that. He drew my attention, and he said: "Molly," says he, "look where is he bringing them?" "Them are from Houlihan's," says I. His head went straight back. "To Mullins' Glebe." I don't know is he there now. I suppose he'll hardly be there after this year.

13. A Warning From a Robin

LÓD Are there any stories about the birds? Any stories about the wren or the robin?

ML The only thing is, people long ago usen't like to see a robin coming to the door. But a robin or a magpie will forewarn you of coming danger. If there's one going a journey, and that journey don't suit him, or is going to be harmful, either the magpie or the robin will keep coming and chirping to the window and come in about the house warning him and giving him... They have a note for singing and they have a double note of warning, the same as they'd be warning the young. Well, they'll use the double note of warning if they want to stop you of a journey.

A man was going in a horse and trap one time down now on the Crean road, and this robin was coming and coming. The wife said: "Don't go," says she, "to Limerick in the morning." So, in the morning the robin flew up in the horse's bridle, up in the ears, up in his hand and his shoulder and was chirping, chirping. So, just facing this cross they did, five birds of them - herself and the five young ones - crossed the road across, and he'd to pull up. And while he was pulling up, a deer crossed the road farther down. And if this animal saw the deer she'd have pitched him into a big river that was just longside him at his left hand side. So, that was a forewarning. They failed at home. They followed him. And they were at home before him again when he came back. And he was seven miles from home.

LÓD Seven miles?

ML He was. He told the story to a brother of his that was living over in Ballincurra, that his grandmother used be always talking about robins. They were only laughing at her.

LÓD And what used the grandmother say?

ML Warning him to take note of the robin.

14. The Haunted Orchard: The Crow on the Barrel

But, I'll tell you a story of an orchard. Do you know that an orchard is one of the most haunted places you could meet? There was boys one time now - this is only lately, about thirty years ago - they decided they'd rob this orchard. And they were waiting for the moon to come up. They had a grand bag under their arm and they said to this fellow: "We'll rob Fred Bevan's orchard just below."

LÓD Bevan's?

ML He's there yet! But he had three of them. So they said they'd go into the outside one. And this fellow said: "Upon my soul," says he, "you won't go in," says he, "when the fellow of the barrel will meet you!" So, they crossed the first two little rushy fields and the moon shone along and one of them said: "There's some rumbling sound!" And the second fellow said: "That's because he told you about the barrel." See? So, they see the object running along the bank at the lower side and the old crow was above on top of it. There it was, rolling along, and he was perched on top of it. But they ran along the bank and when they came to cross, he was there. And everytime they'd go to cross, he used to open the wings and swipe at their face.

LÓD A crow?

ML A crow. And the barrel used to drop and the minute he'd go back, it would roll along again. They tried reverse up and down but they tormented him for two hours and he still beat them to it! Nor didn't go in.

15. The Haunted Orchard: The Dark Object in the Tree

I know of another fellow... An orchard very near home, it is down from Powers' moat. It isn't there now. It is gone away nearly. But, they were doing thrashing and his sister had the thrashing machine and he said: "Jack," says he, "We'll rob ... Are you on tonight? That's a grand tree of yellow apples." But they were scarce the same year. So after their supper, her father asked him: "Where are you going?" "Ah," says he, "we're only going for a walk." "You're up to nothing good!" says he. They went on and the boy elected to stay below because he heard about the orchard, that it was haunted. "I'll be ready to run," says he. So, he had a bag below and your man was above. Says he: "I must have the tree emptied," says he, "they are leaping off the ground!" "No hope," says the boy, "there isn't an apple come down out of it." He gave a terrific shaking and he came down himself. If they were there since, there wasn't an apple on the ground. They came home with the bag empty. Went up next day to finish the thrashing and that tree was laden with apples. But he said, as he was shaking it, he saw a dark form sitting in the tree above him - the dark object - and he thought it was something the old lady put up to frighten the crows. Whereas it wasn't. See. But there...

16. Cutting the Tree on the Fort

The same orchard, there was one tree there, that they decided they'd cut it down and the old man said: "There was a few limbs cut of that," says he, "in my father's time," says he, "and we lost seven cows. Don't touch it." They were laughing at him. So he was gone for a walk this day and they cut the tree. Went down next morning and there was three cows dead in the (unclear). Went down next morning again and the four more were dead. Was there anything to that? And right where the tree is - I was told it and I small, but I took note of it since - there's the remnants of a fort. It was sat, and he said it: "It was sat," says he, "on the top of the fort". You dare...

17. Cows Mysteriously Milked in Moat

But I was milking cows in a place, where the best cow I had was milked at four o'clock in the evening, every evening for three evenings. And... It was herself left them across the road, they were at...in the month of June. That is Valpurgis, I'm going to tell you again.

LÓD Oh, yes. Yes.

ML So. She said, (unclear), says she: "I'll send Dinny across for the cows," says she, "earlier tomorrow night and," says she, "your Daisy won't be milked." She was below the road, and she with her horns stuck through the gate, and the minute he opened the gate, she fled. To a whole field up and the man came up and the dog with him, and I said: "No trace of my cow?" She was milked pure silky out! Not a drop. So, the following night, the boy said: "I'll go down," says he, "when she's crossed into the moat and I'll seize it up." That moat is still there! It is John Carmody's moat. It is still there now. Mannix knows it. But, anyway, he heard the sound of the milk going into the bucket and he shouted and clapped hands and all. She was standing chewing her cud, looking out at him. So, he fired a few stones in and he heard the clamp of the sound of the bucket and the boy saying: "That'll do." There wasn't a sinner there! But the cow was milked. I told her: "Keep that cow," says I, "above next...tomorrow morning." She kept her up. The following night, the girl's cow, a yellow cow, made off spancel and all the minute she sat down under her, and he got her below in the moat and while he was running down after her she was milked. A four and a half gallon! So, I told her anyway to get a Mass said, and to shake the holy water on her.

Forgot all about it. A couple of years after, I was talking of it here. Every seven years it was happening...it used happen there. Since ancient times. So, that was more pishogue work! Wasn't it? But the passage is, a subterranean passage. Wherever a subterranean passage is, underground from one fort to the other... Knocktwo has a fort under it. The subterranean is not found but it was located onto the Castle there. Underground, see?

18. The Headless Coach 1

But, I seen a hearse passing over the road one night at ten minutes to seven and I was no more thinking of it than you. And, I was after hearing that a certain man was taken to the hospital. I took no notice of it. But the noise, noise, noise, was coming. And I said to myself: "I hope it isn't a headless coach!" Because it passed down here a few times, you know, in ancient...

LÓD Did it?

ML Oh, it did. One night at six o'clock. And it carried a victim the same night, the man that met it. But, I'll return to that later.

The hearse went to pass the cross and I slowed down to face the cross and I see the beams, a kind of a green light coming from nowhere, but the noise - the vibration - was a terror. So, I was carrying a smoke to a certain woman, that's why I was on the road so early. It would be early in December. Just beyond McMahons, at a certain ditch that has the name of being haunted - a double bank - I heard the almighty crash. And I stepped up on the ditch. Like everything would break. But I seen the two beams of light. I seen the coffin in the centre - black - and where the brasses would be was bright, and overhead it was bright. But the things were glittering on the top of it. Drawn by two horses, without heads. The horses appeared first, without heads. But it was a headless coach. That was Monday night. The funeral came up the following Saturday night to Athlacca. As usual I had to bring the smoke and I came up the road. At ten minutes to nine. Over at Connells' Cross, the crash came off and there was two of them killed and the third man died in the Regional the day after. Wasn't that odd?

LÓD You saw it yourself?

ML I saw it at ten minutes to seven, the Monday night before, and checked it. And the woman said to me: "Surely to God," says she, "you won't go home that road tonight." "Why wouldn't I?" says I. It went over towards Dromin chapel. But it didn't go beyond that hollow when the crash... That hollow of the road. But that hollow of the road, there was a grey horse and a man with this medieval dress...

DEIREADH TÉIPE: SOS

19. The Robin Consoles Our Lord on the Cross

LÓD Would you have ever heard now what the people would have said here about the robin, whether it was a holy bird or not?

ML Well, it is venerated as a holy bird. Because the robin's history is this: that it is supposed to have been the only one that consoled Our Saviour in...Our Lord on the Cross. It just splashed across when everyone else had deserted and the splash went on its breast. Therefore the robin don't take as long to hatch as any other bird.

20. The Hen, the *Daradaol* and Our Lord

And the hen, because she picked up the ***daradaol*** that spied on Our Lord, that he passed through this garden when this corn was sown. And the old ***daradaol*** stuck up his head and he said: "That's three days ago!" And the hen picked him up and swallowed him. That is a handed down tale.

LÓD The hen of the robin?

ML The hen. The tale of the robin sweeping in to console Our Lord in his dying moments on the cross, the splash of the breast, do you see? Chirped past him. That was a kind of a veneration for his God. Whereas, we'll say, the human race deserted him. Do you see? Well, then, the hen was nearby when the ***daradaol*** said... They asked to know did such a man pass this way? They were directed the route the disciples took. And... That was Pontius Pilate's crowd. And he said this - what way is it? - "Three days ago!" Or: "When I was sowing this seed," says your man. They had no recollection of time, you know. And the ***daradaol*** stuck up his head and, "That was only three days ago!" says he. The miracle was happened that it sprung up to fool the pursuers.

LÓD Oh, they had sowed the seed three days ago...

ML They sowed the seed...

LÓD ...and that was grown now?

ML ...and it sprung up so quick is that it was heading when the hen shot for the ***daradaol***, and that is why he's considered dangerous. Did you ever hear that?

LÓD I did. I heard you were supposed to...

ML The poison will go through your system. That is why you would... And another habit they had: "My seven deadly sins down on top of you," when they lays their heel on him. They used to say it in Irish. What way would you say that now? "My seven deadly sins on top of you?"

LÓD "*Mo sheacht bpeaca anuas ort*," or something.

ML That, and they would kill him, see. But...

LÓD But again, when you said it was the hen, that the hen of the robin it was that said...

ML The robin. It is the cock robin now we'll say.

LÓD The cock robin was on the cross, and it was the hen then that would have...

ML No! But the hen, the ordinary hen that you have on the farm!

LÓD Oh, I see!

ML Do you notice she only take three weeks...

LÓD To hatch?

ML ...to hatch. And the robin has the same. Any bird having anything to do with anything sacred.

21. Swans Try to Save Boy

The swan has a history too of protecting those that's forlorn. I know of a boy that went into a river down here, after Mass, and he was not able to swim. But there was three swans in the river and they flew and made shows when he went to go down, himself and the pal. So he ran along the bank and he said: "I'm taking a swim." It was a hot June day. He dropped in farther on and the swan gave a roar, that you'd think it was someone was shot, a piercing... And she landed on in front of him and tried to peck at him, and as she landed, the swirl of the (unclear). She pursued him along the river and caught the coat and she wasn't strong enough to pull him out. And the rest went up on the bank and flapped their wings, calling and shouting. And the boy that was with him went into a faint. The boy was drowned, though. But, three places they went to go in, them three swans tried to stop them. Didn't they know they were going to come to grief?

22. The Boy Who Broke Robins' Eggs

LÓD You mentioned about the robin and the...stopping the man on the way to Limerick, wasn't it? Up on the trap.

ML It was, yes.

LÓD Well, if... Round the house, what would people think about the robin coming into the house? Would they think it was a lucky or an unlucky thing?

Mrs. Reynolds was with her. But she was after opening a big cut here in side of her head. But she was thrown there in the yard and two fellows going up with a load of rushes and they saw her there. And the magpie was flying at their horse and they coming up the road; the horse wouldn't go on hardly past him. And he stood there in front of the thing and they saw her in the yard and brought her in. So she was unconscious for three days after it, but she got alright. So, that magpie went to stop me.

25. Mollie Saved by an Apparition from the Moat

But I had a very sharp escape one day. James was going to Dublin and I was very lonesome. So, he went... Miss Paul (*sic*) was driving him, and what was it but they were late for the train in Kilmallock. And he was back in just as I was taking a sup of tea. So it was the day of the Lincoln, and of course, I should have a bet to keep up the spirit! So, "I'll go now," says I, "on the bike. I'll be back. You won't be going till half-four tonight."

So, I was cycling on. There was a nice frosty neat on the road. This is now over from Mannix Joyce. He'll know where the moat is! You'll know it too. But, just... I was watching them catching young foals and trying to coax them in the frost to come up to a pan.

LÓD Who was this?

ML Carrolls of Ballygibba. At the right hand side... At the left hand side as I was going up. So I was cycling very slow, watching. The sun was shining. And just as I turn my head some, I saw the bright brown object crossing the road. No bungalow there that time. And says I to myself: "That's unusual!", slowing down the bike a bit to take note. A tall figure, and I saw the whiff of smoke on the top of the ditch. It is longside Lynchs' cottage. It dropped into the field and went from here to the window and stood. Well, I went at a snail's pace on the bike, taking note of it. It stood sideways, I suppose over six feet of a man. This hood above on it, a habit. I could see the brow, the whisker, the point of the nose, the tape tied here. The hood and all was on it. And the hands was joined that way. And, it was barefoot. So, I got no fright. Of course, I was too used to dark! But it was only quarter past eleven in the day ! I was watching it and watching it and says I: "I'll take note of you now and I passing right at your back." Just when I was coming at his back, there did a strong breeze of wind come across from the moat, and the figure just barely wheeled round and all the curl of smoke coiled around - blue smoke - and went across the bushes and back over Lynchs' plot and into the moat again.

So, I was facing for the turn and of course I started off slowly, when I heard the tearing sound of a car, coming on. You'll know the turn now. There's a long... There's two... There's a long house there at the left hand side. But the telegram pole beyond the cottage... He whizzed hither and over in a car, blind drunk, a man with a hat on him. And this was the way he was fostering (*sic*) the wheel. It went up on the ditch, rocked back, went across the road and rocked into the...nearly the thatched house. Out again and by... I went up on the side of the ditch. But as sure as you've that in your hand, that image came deliberately to delay me! If I weren't watching the foals or took my eyes off them, I'd have cycled on as quick as I was going and he'd have hit me on the bit of the road.

LÓD That'd be the end of you! And that would be the end of you.

ML That was that. And I dreamt the night before of a horse leaping over me, the night... But of course I took no notice of it. I was lonesome over him going away. I needn't tell you when you'd be on... I was seven years by myself here!

LÓD Were you?

ML I was. But another thing... I'll keep you all night!

26. Robin Miscellanea

LÓD But I want to talk... I want you to come back to the robins for me again a little bit! Do you know what the Irish for a robin is?

ML ***Ruairín. Róisín.***

LÓD Did you ever hear ***Spideog***? ***Spideog***?

ML ***Spideog***. God, I doubt that ***spideog*** is the Irish for it. ***Spideog***. They don't pronounce... They usen't... There were two kinds of Irish; in very olden times it was different.

LÓD Did you hear some other name for it?

ML I heard a fairly long name for it.

LÓD Did you?

ML I did. ***Ruairí. Róisín rua,*** or something. ***Róisín. Róisín róg*** [.i ruadh(?)], or ***Róisín rua***, or something like that.

LÓD ***Róisín rua***?

ML ***Róisín rua***, or some pronouncing like that. How is it you can...? Did you ever get it now? If you could get a very old Irish book, you would get it in it, because long ago they used all...they all had their own birds. But...

LÓD Did you...? Would you call a person a ***spideog***? Could you call a person a ***spideog***?

ML You would.

LÓD What kind of a person would it be?

ML It would be a one that would be very small and...a kind of cunning. No talk. "That one is a real ***spiodóg***!"

LÓD A man or a woman?

ML It would be a woman. I'd say. It'd allude to a girl or a woman. Ah, what's this now? Did you ever hear the Irish for the ***Gobán Saor***? What does that mean? Have it to do with a forge?

LÓD Well, the ***Gobán*** was a kind of magical mason.

ML Was it? I knew now it had to do with a mason.

LÓD Wait till I see now, have I anything else to ask you? Do you know, when you said about young boys, they shouldn't go and rob robins' nests, did you ever hear, like, when they would trap birds in cradles, and if they caught a robin in the cradle, what would they do with it?

ML They're supposed to let it go.

LÓD Would they?

ML They are.

LÓD Would they ever take a feather out of its tail?

ML I don't think so. Well, they would. Some would, for fear it would carry their luck. I'd say you are right there now. They'd take...they'd tip one little feather, one light feather off the tail.

LÓD Of a robin?

ML Of a robin. But...

LÓD Did you ever see that happen?

ML I didn't ever see it. Of course, I hadn't much recourse to them that way. If I had a robin's nest, I'd watch them till they went away, do you know? And keep them as... We'd be counting all the nests we owned, do you see? Ah, when I got confirmed, I'd seven or eight nests, and I had to go to see them after coming home.

LÓD Why?

ML I had a blackbird's nest. But do you know that a pidgeon will trust you, if he know you, in a nest? The wild... the wood pidgeon now. When I was coming from school and going, there was a low little bush and when you'd go up on the wall, you could touch him inside in the nest and he used never stir!

LÓD Can I go back to that thing about the robin's tail because I heard that in Limerick and Tipperary, I think it was, that they used to take a feather out of the tail.

ML But, had it anything to do...? You wouldn't be wrong now, that it wouldn't be the wren? The one feather standing out of its (tail).

DEIREADH TÉIPE: SOS

TÉIP 3: TAOBH 1

27. The Headless Coach 2

LÓD O'Sullivans, the poets?

ML Yes. It is one of them, the ancient...in very olden times, that met this headless coach going down at ten minutes to six of a summer's evening, and...right across the road from me his father and mother, his brother and himself were living. But he was gifted. He could hear music anywhere, play it. He had a flute and he had what they call the jew's harp.

LÓD Oh, I know it, yes.

ML Well, he used go to all crossroad dances and everything. But he could paint a hunt, paint anything in your mind's eye.

But he was only seventeen years of age. And it was from a Roche man that lived outside here that time, they had a thatched house and a lovely kitchen garden. But the mother used be watching out. That time they'd have the dinner at six in the evening. So, he used to hear some bell over towards Bulgaden and he'd leave the castle and come up. But as he was coming up the road from the castle, when he came out on the road he heard the terrible noisy sound - there was no cottage there that time, nor here either. But he stood and listened and the sound was getting heavier and nearer. So eventually, when he was here in the hollow of the road, he saw all the black, lined across the road coming on towards him. It was four headless horses, drawing a big black coach and the men had no heads either but white liveries flying back off them. And a most silent crowd of about two hundred following them, walking on behind it. There was like spears and scythe-trees (?) standing. He'd to go up on top of the ditch, but he could hear the whispering and it was the yoke was making the noise, the coach. But they followed it on in silence.

And he came in and the mother said: "Tadhg," says she, "you're very white and pale." "Mam," says he, "what was it?" "What're you saying?" says she. "There did some noisy thing pass down," says she, "but if it was there since, I couldn't see it. But," says she, "it was a long time coming and passing on. Did you meet it?" "I had to go up on the ditch from it, Mam," says he. So he took a drink of water. "Oh, Mam," says he, "there is Jamesy Malley and there is his first wife," says he, "that was carried into Hogans' moat." So she threw the holy water on him. And he said: "What time is it?" "It is six o'clock," says she. "I'll lie in the bed, Mam," says he. "Six o'clock in the morning, I won't be with you." So she began to cry and she called the father and the brother. They sent for the priest. The priest questioned him. He answered him. And says he: "They meant," says he, "to take me." So he read over him and all and he was down at ten minutes to six and he died at five to six across abroad there.

But he was a genius for composing poetry and song, dance and everything. So they got so heartbroken they went back to a brother of an uncle of the father's. And his Pat - Patrick was the elder boy - two years after, the other boy took up the business. But it is only about...about sixteen years ago a party of them arrived to Father Leonard to know where here were their ancestors born and reared. And I was in the chapel and he never knew it and he sent them over here! So. But, I showed the little place where they used walk up to the hall door - it's still there. But that house was burned. They say any place medieval things enter, the house will always be burned.

28. The Brown Stone from the Moat

But I'll finish up with you now in another case. Two... I'll just finish out this. A long stone - brown stone - about that breadth, flattened...

LÓD Yes. That's about three or four inches?

ML It would be about from four and a half to six inches, made the make of a hurley on top, where you'd catch it with your hand. Well, that is..."the wishing stone" they call it. It is always to be found in near the foundation of a moat or in a moat, or in those rings now that I'm saying, those fields. But I know two people, or heard tell of them, that had a brother going for the priesthood and he said: "Alice," says he, "I'll take a walk up." He got six weeks off for to...just before his ordination."I'll take a walk up the hill," says he. And... "Oh!" says their Michael, "don't be long." So, about ten past eight, Alice got very uneasy. Says she: "They have met him." "Who?" says her other sister. "Oh," says she, "he's surely gone up to that fort." So they got very uneasy and they went up. And he was down at the foot of it, and he lying down. He had a crucifix in this hand and he had that stone in the other hand and he stone dead! They'd to carry him down on a door.

But, the sister, the other sister, caught the stone and she threw it into the thing, and he was dead in...

LÓD Into where? Where did she throw it?

ML She threw it back into the moat, you know, the stone. She took it out of his hand and she threw it into the moat. So, his second brother got queer. Never went near a church nor a chapel after! That's the man now I told you I heard the banshee over, that died over in the Corcas. So, it do follow them.

But, this night he said to the elder sister: "That one," says he, "Alice, can't be kept in." She was the youngest. Says he: "I see her crossing down the field, running, the other night with the moonlight. What in the name of God had became her? I suppose, she thinking of the brother." So he watched her this night and she had the stone, putting it under her head in the pillow. It was so fascinating. They couldn't take it off her; they could do nothing. So he... By a row, he took it off her and he fired it up into a loft, do you know, these old attics?

So, as time went by, the boys weren't sleeping there. It is all old useless things... She was in and out, and raving and out about the fields. And, it was Jim's father said, says he: "Get rid of that thing she brought down. (It) brought enough of misfortune." They searched high, low, up and down. It was never got. And he fired it in; he heard it dropping inside. But, a boy said to him about six months after: "Sir," says he, "wouldn't you put a door in that old attic?" "Why?" says he. "There's an old woman there" says he, "with a pointed cap, and she goes in and up there," says he, "and she have nothing to go up on, but she do be there," says he, "with a broom and she sweeping and she throwing back things."

But one night there about eleven years ago, the house got burned at about two o'clock in the morning. No-one living in it. And it is from that end it went on fire! With no cause at all. They always burn. So. They're what they call them, "the grinding stone". Another... That is why people avoid the flat brown stone. They say you should never bring them into a home or put them in a building.

29. The Robin Warns of Fire

LÓD You mentioned the fire there. Can I go back again to the robin for another one question more? Did you ever hear any connection between the robin and fire?

ML A robin will forewarn you of fire, alright. They say if he come three times, three days running, that you should always take out the last of the fire at night and quench it. You should also if there was a young child in the house put a poker and tongs crossways over the cradle before you go outside the door.

LÓD If a robin comes?

ML If a robin is seen around the door or... It isn't but I had a robin there several times, but I'd say it was more he was tame.

LÓD A kind of a pet?

30. Crickets Warn of Impending Death

ML I took no notice of him. But crickets come warning before death, or before disaster. Did you ever hear of them?

LÓD Well, I heard that...

ML Crickets?

LÓD Yes. I heard that they'd leave the house if they thought that there was anything going to happen.

ML Yes. They were here when this house was built. And his wife only lived eleven months there. And she said: "Johnny," says she, "our friends are gone. I didn't hear them at all the last three nights." From that day to this, they were never heard there.

31. Three Knocks on Door as Death Omen

Another warning I'm going to give you; if you're inside, or if you're in bed, a knock comes to the door. You check: there's no one there. Go to bed. The knock will come again. Check: no one there. Never go the third time! It happened me here and a woman told me that it happened in Ballincurra and the boy that went out was found drowned next morning. He followed the object and thought he was on the road and fell into a big trench. So, that was odd!

32. More on the Robin and Fire

LÓD It was odd. But when you mentioned the robin and him coming three times, is it that your house would go on fire, or something, on you?

ML That something would happen, or disaster would be waiting someone. That an accident, or a child might... It could come before a one getting a bad fit - a child would be in danger, you know?

LÓD You didn't hear anything about, you know, the story about the red breast - you told me before about being on the cross...

ML Well, that's the only thing I heard now, that it swept across Our Lord.

LÓD You didn't hear anything about the fire there, did you? No?

ML Never heard about the... I heard some rumour about the fire, alright.

LÓD Did you?

ML I did. But I thought that it was an owl hooting, an inchy- minny, as a warning for fire. Do you see? That...

33. Mollie Sees Tall Shadow of a Man

But, the very last thing that happened me now would be last March four years. I was at a house and there is... I was coming home about twenty past eleven, and the moon... There was only a half moon there. It was rising over in the east. And I suddenly became aware that I wasn't alone on the road. And I gave a look back and about from here to the window, at that side of the road, now I see the shadow, the tall shadow of the man. He was dressed with a big cape, a big spear going back and kind of things rolled round the legs and spurs, the toes of the shoes were turned up and the backs of them were turned up like spurs in the heel. But he was awful tall. But his shadow was on the opposite side of the road. It was at the east side of the road whereas it should be to the west. Do you know? And the moon was not up high enough to cast a shadow. It was a dark night. So, as quick as I'd walk, I could hear the thud, thud and I suddenly became aware of it overtaking me. And just opposite Powers' moat, I stepped up on the ditch and just the breeze bent the bushes from the opposite side - a cold, cold breeze. And I said: "Oh! Mother of God!" And the very minute I did, all the sand and thing rooted around the road and a glittering light ran over into the fort. But it was the most eerie thing going! But...

34. The Turkey from the Moat

In the... Above the quarry now, on two different occasions... My own husband never believed in anything. But this big turkey stopped him above the quarry one night on the bike. And whatever direction he'd go, she used to fly at him. She was about that height. But he heard the whirr-whirr of the wings coming across from the moat. So, another night then he was over in Knocktwo. He used go for a stick. And he was after being in Bruff. And I said: "Don't go over there." They came in and says he: "I met my friend!" And he was as white as a sheet. "Who?" says I. So. "You're the only one, I suppose, that was coming (unclear)." Says he: "He arrived alright," says he, "and he squawked down on top of me but he's gone right up into Powers' house. But," says he, "I'm not surprised," says he. "My brother had to give up sleeping there over him, in an outhouse."

The brother would have been here - he was killed in Flanders in France, the eldest of them. He'd have been here.

35. Mollie Sees Dead Brother-in-Law

LÓD That's your husband's...?

ML He is. He'd have been the eldest of them. And the night this one I was telling you was dying now, she was dying several times, Maggie Casey... I was in and out. She had asthma, we'll say, his aunt. So, Maggie Casey would be a cousin of hers, and she was bad above stairs and I said to her: "You'll fall asleep," says I, see. But I became aware of being called by my name and I woke up and that door was open and that one and the lamp was shining across. Of course no lights them time. And I saw the soldier standing. He stepped in inside the door. With the khaki and the peaky cap. And just as I came to I nudged her. She was above. "Patsy! Patsy!" So I rushed out and I went across and there kind of a creepy cold feel come over me and I went upstairs and I said: "What ails you Maggie?" "Did you meet him?" says she. "Who?" says I. "Our Patsy," says she. "Not Patsy Moroney now," says she, "my aunt's husband. But the Patsy," says she, "that was out in France." And. "Why?" says I. "He's after coming to me here now," says she, "and he went down for you." She... I asked her what time... She asked me what time... "Ten to four," says I. She died at ten to four that evening. "It will be this evening," says she, "ten to four." She was raving for ages and she prayed for everyone and anyone and she said: "I knew he'd come for me!" Wasn't that...

DEIREADH TÉIPE: SOS

36. Mollie Warned of Fire in Dream

LÓD Yes. To dream of fire?

ML To dream of fire is dead-on disaster. I know of three people it happened to. I dreamt one night that I was coming across the hill with a bucket of water and I see a flame out of the chimney here. Jim's mother would be her sister. And I was supposed to go in there this night after the cows. At six o'clock we were milking cows just near it. Pakie Lynch is living there now! But, I said to her: "Ellen," says I, "I'll be here before nine o'clock. Don't you stir from that fire." So, I sat down, went in, got my bottle of milk and went in. Katie was gone back to ring the chapel bell. And I didn't think she'd be my sister in law that time! But, the terrible... She was telling me something. If you gave me the sweep, that heavy feeling... I thought I felt the chair kind of weighty and pushing behind me. Says she to me: "You're gone drole," says she. "Haven't you tonight got off?" "I have," says I, "but I must go". "What are you saying?" says she. I dreamt three nights before that about the fire. And she said to me: "Mind yourself crossing up."

But I came on up and I had a bucket of water ahide there in Hogans in the briars so that I'd bring it on. As hard as I could run, I ran it up six fields. I left at ten minutes to seven. I was here before twenty past seven and that room was in a blaze. I could see the window across the road. I knew something was wrong. So, I threw the bucket of water. It was an altar that was papered. There was a picture of Saint Francis inside, that her father warned her never to burn it. He bought it after getting married. It is still there! Says he: "He has saved my life twice," says he, "and he'll save you." It was lighting up all round it; there was rent receipts there, look, and here was the blaze and you could see the picture through the...from the road, framed in the middle of it. I put out the blaze with the bucket of water. Johnny's was living across the road. Every bit of me was in a shake. She was thrown down in a heap. There was the side of the sleeve burned, there was the skirt burned, there was an old woollen thing all lit up here. She was gone into a coma. I had to pull her out in the yard and rip up the thing and all. But it was the luck of God Jim came down that night. He said he felt very uneasy and he called. So, that humoured her up. But what collapsed her, she remembered having given me the time off.

LÓD Having given you the...?

ML Having given me the night off. That there was no hope. But she'd be burned to a cinder.

LÓD God, she would. I have a bit of a cold now myself!

SOS

37. Will o' the Wisp

LÓD The Will o' the Wisp?

ML The Will o' the Wisp can put you astray, though.

LÓD And what is it?

ML Some would tell you that it is a chemical or a gas that rise with a certain temperature, did you ever hear that? Still, I know of a man that was carrying a bush one night and the light came up to him and he said: "Good night, Jacky!" Jacky appeared below at the ditch but your man was going around the field all night with the bush above on his shoulder, nearly till two o'clock in the morning. Till it is past twelve. After twelve. If it is really bad.

38. The Haunted House in the Corcas

But there was a house down in the Corcas, in olden times, and several families had to leave it. So. This... When the old couple here got married, they got it. It belonged to a Bermingham. Well, a Bermingham means that there're those that go into emergency, taking those lands or robbed of cows and cattle. Well, they had the Corcas and they had this farm above, and so also a Carmody place. But, anyway, she was there one evening and there was a devil-may-care, he came home from England, and he said: "Kiteen," says he, "you aren't up yet!" Do you see and it was..." The doors were pulled of string, my dear, and the latch would rise up", like Red Riding Hood! So, he looked in and the old terrier began barking at him and he see the figure of an old woman outlined in a big armchair in the corner. And the next thing was, he shouted again, and the dog got lashed agin the wall, inside in the house. And a feeling came over him that she'd never lash the dog, do you know? She wasn't long married. So, he told her afterwards. Well, she'd sit down outside that door waiting till he'd come from work before she'd go in, after he telling her the story!

But, his sister then was put out over an old house in Bruff. And she'd seven in the family. And there was... the eight one was coming up. So they moved back to it and she made out it was imagination. But while he was there, the eldest one of them was burned, you know; the first child was burned here. The child was burned and she started roaring and bawling: "The Boo! The Boo!" And she wasn't gone three minutes out when the whole thing and the child was in a blaze. She died that night. So, the woman that was here was thrown out of the cradle beyond and she only three weeks old. Across to the wall. So, he was giving out that she ran out to stop the cows and left the children, the little babies, by theirself.

But she had a couple of frights got previous to that. But the sister, anyway, came and she used lay the supper for him in the centre of the floor, potatoes and whatever they'd have, only a supper with buttermilk. But she went into bed. There was only a blind cross, and this night, one of the youngsters called and they said: "There's something terrible rumbling at the door!" She opened the door and a big rush of wind came in and, "Mam," said..."Look at the big black dog," says one of them. So she shut the door quick. And the following night, she settled it again. So she heard the noise again and she said: "Your supper," says she, "is there. Don't mind fumbling about!" The very minute she did, she got a slap of a cold hand down in the face and what ware was there was crashing around the house. He came in ten minutes after and he said to her, there was a black object sitting with its back up to the door and he heard the snarl of a dog. But he searched around and couldn't get it. Wasn't that remarkable?

LÓD It was.

ML That baby was born. She moved on to Bruff again and she noticed... Someone said to her: "That child is blind." She wouldn't believe it. So, there was a well down here in Castleievers, it was called Saint Broney's, Saint Broney's Well. So, it was very tiny and a very tiny little church. She took the child down, the second of February, I think it was, and she... You should go, I think three times - see? - before the festival would come up. But she took the child down and she prayed for him and all. He was four years old. So, she... After about... Just after bringing him home the last night, he shouted: "Look!" and he handed her a feather off the floor and he went and he kissed one of the small ones, you see? So, she dreamt this night that she was in that house again and the voice said to her: "He's mine! He's seven years." The child was dead on the morning of his seventh birthday, not there, but over in Bruff.

LÓD The same child?

ML The same child, and she buried him in that churchyard where he was cured.

LÓD Saint Brona's?

ML Kilbroney. It is not a churchyard now. It is let into commonage.

39. Personal Reminiscences

LÓD You weren't born in this house? No?

ML What?

LÓD Where are you from yourself?

ML Oh, I wasn't born here.

LÓD Where are you from, Molly?

ML I'm from Mount Coote, if you like.

LÓD Mount...?

ML Mount Coote. My ancestors, Toltons, were in Mount Coote. But...

LÓD And is that far away?

ML It is only above Kilmallock!

LÓD Oh, I see!

ML Ah, I spent the last night in Kilmallock Hospital the night the boys were taking the barrack and I was only nine years of age and I was with a little girl called Mary Carey from Clonmel. And we were sleeping two a bed because we were up in Saint Mary's, there was twenty-eight...there was over fifty in the ward, if you like. And we were all told to be quiet. So, this night we were chased to bed at six o'clock, which meant war, of course. And the older ones came later. There was nobody to go down to the w.c. once the nun left the ward till she'd come back in the morning. Naturally, the two culprits made off, out of the bed! And we could hear all the clattering and the sparks of lights and our heads stuck out the window - sure we could be shot! - at the end of the w.c. It was turned for the town. It is only the County Council place now! Millmount is built in it, all the houses! So, we came back up and we were chased to bed and we went on again, and in the morning we said: "The old cracked fellow was out firing stones all night!" We thought he was out at one of the houses below, because there was...it was a workhouse that they used call it. It was under the British rule.

But in the morning, we weren't left down for breakfast and I used carry a cup of water, bring it in from the Fever Hospital side to an old woman, and I started crying: "You'll get no cup of water today." So the sister said: "Pack up all your things," says she, "you'll be all gone out of this quick. So will we all." Do you see? So, we could see the smoke coming in the windows and we couldn't know what was wrong. So, immediately - I was sitting this way - and I said: "Oh, Sister," says I, "here is Ellen!", leaping up and clapping my hands. And four or five more, we saw them. "This isn't visiting day. It is Monday." Do you see? It was of a Sunday night, I think, they attacked it.

So, when all was ready, I said to her: "Have you your ticket for going out through the gate?" "Now," says she... It was the eye was at me, you know; I had a bandage on it. So, I was after killing myself crying, I wouldn't be sent to Cork, of course, with the eyes! On account of the war. But, we came out and she said: "There's no ticket, Molly," says she, "and you're not a word out of you now," says she, "Black and Tans are down here and they're...I've three papers here," says she. "With the old asses' car, we'll be lucky if we get out of town." And says I: "Where is he?" "I have him tied below," says she, "near the Castle, in the town." So, I saw the Union Jack in balls of flame and of course, naturally, I was an Irishwoman, I gave one cheer, and (unclear). And "Hi! Ellen!", says I, "look at the fellows with the pans on their heads!" Do you see?

LÓD Yes.

ML And just as I looked across, the flames were leaping up in the barrack at the other side. And you... I got a butt of a rifle... "I'll give you," says he, "the pans on their heads!" A Black and Tan hit me a belt of the butt of the rifle in the back and they chased us on down. But she was stopped five times from that down to...

LÓD Who was Ellen?

ML That would be... She was a stepmother, or my foster-mother, do you see? So. She adopted me, you know. That's the way it happened here. So, I was here since I was hardly four years.

LÓD In Rathcannon?

ML In Rathcannon.

LÓD In this house?

ML Yes. And I'm here still and will till the end!

LÓD Oh, I see.

ML I'm seventy-three! Would you take me to be it?

LÓD I wouldn't. I would not!

ML April. Seventh of April. I should have made a cup of tea for you! You're starved!

LÓD Not at all. No. No. I won't stay much longer now.

ML You'll kill me!

LÓD No, I won't! What did you say, April...?

ML I was born April, nineteen nought seven - the twentieth of April, nineteen nought seven.

LÓD By gor, you're great.

ML Now.

LÓD You're tremendous. You're topping!

ML But, I always cherish that memory, and do you know why? I met an old woman there of a hundred and two.

LÓD Where?

ML In that hospital...

LÓD In Kilmallock?

ML ...about a week before we was moved. And we were trying to catch a jackdaw, a band of us - breaking the rules of course! - and we went into the old womens' sheds. Of course, it was an awful insult to see women smoking clay pipes and bits of stems that time. So, the rest were in dread of the old women to go in, and I went in along and the old jackdaw was hopping along under the beds, and there was sticks flying at me! But down at the end anyway, I was looking at this one, she was in a heap of lace. And I said to her: "Oh!" says I, "where did you get it all?" And she was still at it away. "Child", says she, "I'm over seventy years, nearly...over eighty... I'm surely", says she, "over eighty years since I stood on my feet." So, she told me what happened her when she was seven years of age.

Valpurgis night, on the side of Knocktwo, she went over to the bonfire after being chased to bed, and she got a pain in her leg when she slipped going up the side of the hill to them. And whatever happened the knee, it never got better. She was sent to the Richmond, she was sent everywhere and anywhere, but she had six hospitals in Dublin done, she told me, in her lifetime. So, she was a hundred and two. She asked me... I told her, Rathcannon. She blessed herself and the tears ran down her face: "I was born and reared there!" says she. Her first cousin. She'd be a first cousin to the woman here! She... Her mother was Sweeney and the woman that died here, or that came up from the Corcas to here, was Sweeney. A Mary Sweeney and a Kit - Catherine - Sweeney. So, there was only two brothers and a sister. And one of the brothers was killed in the Boer War. The other fellow got drowned in Africa and she was the last. But, she told me, "Call up again." And she'd make a lace collar...

DEIREADH TÉIPE

Notes and References

These Notes and References are a first, and regrettably incomplete, attempt to place Mollie Lynch's repertoire, as represented in the one evening of ***seanchas*** recorded from her in December 1980, in the context of Irish folklore generally and in the context of the study of folklore internationally. The following are the main abbreviations used in the Notes:

Béaloideas	The Journal of the Folklore of Ireland Society. Vol. 1 (1927).....in progress.
DROMIN ATHLACCA	Mainchín Seoighe (1978), *Dromin Athlacca: The Story of a Rural Parish in Co. Limerick*, Glór na nGael, Áth Leacach, Co. Luimnigh.
HIF	Seán Ó Súilleabháin (1942), *A Handbook of Irish Folklore*, The Folklore of Ireland Society, Dublin.
SPIDEOG 1	Liam Ó Dochartaigh, "An Spideog i Seanchas na hÉireann", *Béaloideas* 45-7 (1977-9), pp. 164-98.
SPIDEOG 2	Liam Ó Dochartaigh, "An Spideog i Scéalaíocht na hÉireann", *Béaloideas* 50 (1982), pp. 90-125.

Other abbreviations are:

AT (with a number): a Type of international folktale (Aarne and Thompson).
ML(with a number): a Type of international Migratory Legend (Christiansen; with additions by Briggs).
Motif (with a letter and number): a motif found internationally in folk narrative (Thompson).
TIF: the catalogue of Irish versions of international folktales (AT...) (Christiansen and Ó Súilleabháin).
LSÍC: Séamus Ó Duilearga (1948), *Leabhar Sheáin Í Chonaill*, B.Á.C.
These abbreviations are well-known to students of folklore.

1. **The First Wife Returns**

   cf. HIF, p. 249 ("Dead Spouse Returns") and p. 456 ("Fairy Borrowing").
   "about from here to the road": about 15 metres.
   "Valpurgis": Mollie meant Midsummer when she referred to "Valpurgis". The original *Walpurgisnacht* is, of course, May Eve. Her use of this term may reflect the influence of the German- speaking Palatines who settled in County Limerick early in the eighteenth century (1709). cf. M. Seoighe (1982), ***Portrait of Limerick***. London, pp. 105-7.

2. **Minding the Well May Eve**

   cf. HIF, pp. 335-6 ("The Well at Maytime"); also K. Danaher (1972), *The Year in Ireland*, Cork, p.113 and Vincent Woods, "On a May Morning Early", *Sinsear 2* (1980), p. 71.
   I recorded another (considerably longer) telling of this story from Mollie on 23 January 1981.

3. **The Priest and the Woman who Stole Butter-Profit**

   cf. HIF, p. 384 ("Priest *v.* Milk-'Profit' Stealers").
   cf. ML 3040 The Witch Making Butter.
   "and she wheeling one that way": Mollie here moved her right hand as if to swing a spancel vertically with a circular motion. She also motioned her left hand towards her back.
   Mollie also used the GOD/DOG motif in another story collected from her by Mainchín Seoighe (see DROMIN ATHLACCA, pp. 192-3).

4. **Mollie and the Banshee**

   cf. Patricia Lysaght (1986), *The Banshee: the Irish Supernatural Death-Messenger, Dublin*. Also HIF, pp. 490-1.

5. **The Dog and the Card Player 1**
cf. ML 3015 The Card Players and the Devil; also E. Ní Anluain, "An Cearrbhach agus an Diabhal: ML 3015 in Éirinn", *Sinsear* 5 (1988), pp. 75-87.
cf. DROMIN ATHLACCA, p. 192 for another telling of this story collected by Mainchín Seoighe from Mollie.

6. **The Light in the Fort**
cf. HIF, p. 513 ("Strange Lights").
"that height from the ground": about 1/2 metre.

7. **The Dog and the Card Player 2**
cf. HIF, p. 484 ("Spirits in Animal Form").
"medieval": Mollie's use of this word here and in other items (Nos. 18, 27 below) was idiosyncratic. I felt at the time that she herself thought the second element of the word was the word "evil".

8. **The Cards as Prayer-Book**
cf. HIF, p. 513 (the international folktale AT1613 "*Playing-Cards are my Calendar and Prayer-Book*").
For another version of this folktale see *Béaloideas* 15 (1945), pp. 261-3. See also TIF, pp. 283-4 for further references to Irish versions of this folktale.
Mollie and her son James may here have been thinking of the popular song/recitation of the fifties, "The Deck of Cards".

9. **The Dead Priest Returns to Say Mass**
cf. ML4015 The Midnight Mass of the Dead
ML4021* Troublesome Ghost Laid

10. **Bird and Animal Lore**
Robin, scaldcrow, wood-thrush, woodcock, swan, raven, heron, *gabhairín* ('jack snipe'), hare, fox, wren.
cf. HIF, pp. 269 ff. ("Wild Birds"), pp. 294 ff. ("Mammals") and p.295 (hare-lip).

11. **Rushlights in Olden Times**
cf. HIF, p. 76, ("Candles and Rushlights"); also E.E. Evans (1957), *Irish Folkways,* London, pp. 89-91.

12. **More Bird Lore**
Wren, goldfinch, heron.
cf. HIF, pp. 289 ff.
Father (Joseph) Leonard was Parish Priest in Dromin and Athlacca from 1963-1973 (cf. DROMIN ATHLACCA, p. 183). See also Note 27 below.

13. **A Warning from a Robin**
cf. SPIDEOG 1, pp. 188-9 (rabhadh ón spideog) agus 190-1 ("An Spideog mar Theachtaire").

14. **The Haunted Orchard: The Crow on the Barrel**
cf. HIF, p. 507 ("Places with Supernatural Characteristics").

15. **The Haunted Orchard: The Dark Object in the Tree**
See Note 14 above.

16. **Cutting the Tree on the Fort**
cf. HIF, p. 436 ("Cutting of Certain Bushes and Trees") and p. 469 ("Fairy Trees and Bushes").

17. **Cows Mysteriously Milked in the Moat**
    cf. HIF, p. 33 ("Milking Lore") and pp. 457-8 ("Fairies Milk Farmers' Cows").
    cf. ML5081* Fairies Steal Food and the Motif F366.1 Fairies Milk Mortal's Cows Dry.
    "Mannix knows it.": Mainchín Seoighe cf. also Note 25 below.
    For subterranean passages, cf. HIF, p. 276 ("Underground Passages"). See also DROMIN ATHLACCA, pp. 10-12 for the discovery of a souterrain ("tunnel") linking two forts.

18. **The Headless Coach 1**
    cf. HIF, p. 491 ("Headless Coach"). Also: Patricia Lysaght "A Chóiste gan Cheann Dén tAm san Oíche É?", *Sinsear* 2 (1980), pp. 43-59. This article includes references to Limerick material.

19. **The Robin Consoles Our Lord on the Cross**
    cf. SPIDEOG 1, pp. 174-7 ("Údar na Broinne Deirge").
    Motif: A2221.2.2. *Blood from Cross on Robin Redbreast:* He helps Jesus; rewarded with red breast.

20. **The Hen, the *Daradaol* and Our Lord**
    cf. HIF, p. 301 (Cockroach and *Darbhdaol)* and LSÍC, pp. 2-3 and 416. Also, *Béaloideas* 15 (1945), p. 283 and S. Ó Súilleabháin (1952), *Scéalta Cráibhtheacha*, B.Á.C., p. 21-2 (In this version, from Co. Mayo, one has to say, "Peacaí an lae, mo shaoil, agus mo sheacht sinsear ort!" while killing the *deargdaol).*
    I was confused myself as to which hen Mollie meant, as I had collected a version of this story in Irish in Inis Mór, Co. Galway, the previous Summer, in which the robin took the role taken by the farmyard hen in Mollie's version.

21. **Swans Try to Save Boy**
    cf. HIF, p. 293.

22. **The Boy Who Broke Robins' Eggs**
    cf. SPIDEOG 1, pp. 179-82 ("Éinín Beannaithe agus Cosanta").

23. **Cure in the Robin for Bad Complaint**
    cf. SPIDEOG 1, pp. 191-4 ("An Spideog agus Tinneas").

24. **Mollie Receives a Warning from a Magpie**
    cf. HIF, P. 292 (Magpie).

25. **Mollie Saved by an Apparition from the Moat**
    cf. HIF, pp. 487 ff. ("Ghosts or Apparitions").
    "Mannix Joyce": Mainchín Seoighe.
    "from here to the window": about 3 metres.
    "as sure as you've that in your hand": the microphone!

26. **Robin Miscellanea**
    cf. SPIDEOG 1, pp, 169-72 ("Ainm an Éin"); pp. 172-3 ("'Spideog' mar Leasainm"); pp. 194-5 ("Eireaball na Spideoige").

27. **The Headless Coach 2**
    See Note 18 above.
    "Father Leonard": see Note 12 above.

28. **The Brown Stone from the Moat**
    cf. HIF, p. 394 ("Stones with Special Powers") and p. 395 ("Unlucky Stones").
    cf. Motif F361.1 Fairies set fire to buildings.
    "this hand": the right hand.

29. **The Robin Warns of Fire**
cf. SPIDEOG 1, p. 179; SPIDEOG 2, p. 122 (Tine).

30. **Crickets Warn of Impending Death**
cf. HIF, p. 301 (Cricket). See also C. Ó Danachair, "The Luck of the House", *Ulster Folklife* 15/16 (1970), p. 25.

31. **Three Knocks on Door as Death Omen**
cf. HIF, p. 216 and pp. 379-80 ("Death Omens").

32. **More on the Robin and Fire**
See Note 29 above.

33. **Mollie Sees Tall Shadow of a Man**
cf. HIF, pp. 487 ff. ("Ghosts and Apparitions").
"from here to the window": about 3 metres.

34. **The Turkey from the Moat**
cf. HIF, pp. 482 ff. ("Spirits in Animal Form etc.")
"about that height": about 1.5 metres.

35. **Mollie Sees Dead Brother-in-Law**
cf. HIF, p. 249 ("Dead Seen in Distant Places").

36. **Mollie Warned of Fire in Dream**
cf. HIF, p. 378 ("Dreams").

37. **Will o' the Wisp**
cf. HIF, p. 498 ("Will o'the Wisp").

38. **The Haunted House in the Corcas.**
cf. HIF, pp. 508-9 ("Haunted House").
"The Boo! The Boo!": Mollie's form of the anglicised representation of *badhbh*, another name for the banshee (cf. Patricia Lysaght, *The Banshee*, pp. 34-40).
"a blind cross": a partition or curtain between parents' and children's beds.
"Saint Broney's Well": cf. DROMIN ATHLACCA, pp. 13-4; 97 ("One local source says that rounds were made at the well from the 7th to the 11th of February").

39. **Personal Reminiscences**
The attack on Kilmallock R.I.C. barracks took place on 28 May 1920. cf. Mainchín Seoighe (1987), *The Story of Kilmallock*, pp. 271-2.
For Midsummer bonfires, cf. K. Danaher (1972), *The Year in Ireland*, Cork, pp. 137-45. Also HIF, pp. 339-41 ("St. John's Feast - Midsummer"). For Mollie's use of the term "Valpurgis" (i.e. Midsummer), see Note 1 above. Additional material on "Valpurgis" (i.e. Midsummer) was recorded by me from Mollie on 23 January 1981.